

REMARKS

The rejection of Claim 22 under 35 USC § 112, ¶ 4 is traversed, but in any event is deemed moot by the foregoing amendments to Claims 20 and 22. Reconsideration of the rejection is most respectfully requested.

The rejections of Claims 20, 22, 23 and 26 to 28 as being unpatentable over Amendt et al in view of Huitema under 35 USC § 103(a) is traversed, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested.

In addition to the difference between the present invention and the Amendt et al apparatus acknowledged in the Office Action, the latter also does not teach or suggest the control of the throttle angle in relation to the release of the engagement of the first clutch as described at page 37, lines 16-23 of the Specification with reference to time period b to c in Fig. 16, thereby providing a smooth transition to coasting. In this connection, when the brake release action is started at time (a), the creeping of the start (first) clutch begins, and the throttle angle (θ) is gradually increased, thereby allowing the vehicle to move. When the vehicle speed (V_{sp}) reaches a predetermined value at time (b), the creeping of the start clutch is gradually reduced while the throttle angle (θ) is gradually decreased. At time (c), the start clutch is completely disengaged to allow the vehicle to move. According to the control of the throttle angle in the period between time (b) and time (c), a smooth transient from the vehicle start to coasting in a certain vehicle speed is obtained without an undesired shock. No such teaching in the recited combination is found in the prior art.

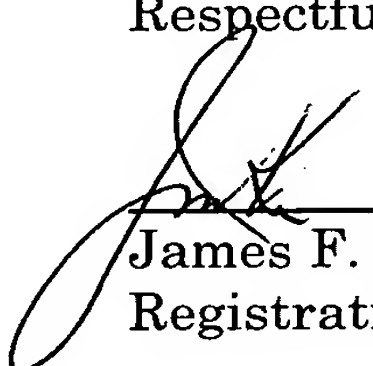
Accordingly, early and favorable action is earnestly solicited.

If there are any questions regarding this response or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket # 056203.49699C1).

Respectfully submitted,

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